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SOURCE Cumhuriyet.

REVEAL CONDITIONS IN SATELLITE COUNTRIES

The following information, taken from the Istanbul newspaper Cumhuriyet for the period 25 November - 17 December 1951, reveals current conditions and happenings in Bulgaria, Rumania, Czechoslovakia, and Poland.

Numbers in parentheses refer to appended sources.

Bulgaria

A Turkish News Agency dispatch dated 26 November reported that a clash between 80 guerrillas and a Bulgarian military unit had occurred when the former attacked a mill in the village of Topolchantisi, Sliven Okoliya. According to the dispatch, the 4-day fight resulted in the wounding of one first lieutenant and one soldier; the guerrilla losses are unknown. The dispatch also reported that recently, all transport vehicles passing through the mountainous Rhodope area near the Greek-Turkish border have been attacked by the Gorion Or Gorion's guerrillas.(1)

On 12 December, Cumhuriyet carried the following article:

The start of a violent purge is being awaited in Bulgaria. Reports indicate that although Premier Chervenkov is still seen in official places, he has lost the favor of the Soviets and will probably be purged. Rumors say that the reasons for Chervenkov's fall from grace are: (1) the failure to suppress the armed resistance movement in the country; actually the movement has been increasing in recent weeks although the Premier had promised the Kremlin to suppress it; and (2) the complete failure of the collectivization plans. Chervenkov has changed Agriculture Ministers numerous times but to no effect.(2)

Living conditions in Bulgaria are revealed in the following 16 December Ankara Agency dispatch from Sofia:

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Although the harvest season is still far off, the food shortage in Bulgaria is already serious. Eight hundred grams of rationed bread sells for 70 piasters but has become so black as to be uneatable; corn cobs, bran, and other materials make up a greater part of the bread than the black flour. Six hundred grams of white bread sells for 115 piasters, but it is possible to obtain it only by waiting for hours in front of the ovens or by using armed force. Actually, 90 percent of the available bread reaches the black market, where it sells for 230 piasters. A kilogram of kashar cheese is 12 lira in Turkish money, and then it is fatless and like stone. A kilogram of sugar costs 5 lira, but it is not easy to find.

A liter of raki and of wine costs 12 and 8 lira respectively on the black market. In restaurants, fatless soup costs 40-45 piasters; bean soup, 35-50 piasters; and dried bean soup with a little fat, 45-70 piasters; while 100 grams of meat cost 200-320 piasters and a portion of fresh vegetables, 120-250 piasters. The monthly income of a Bulgarian family varies between 40 and 70 lira. To supplement this, they are being forced to sell their house furnishings at very low prices to the Communists and militiamen.(3)

Rumania

Cumhuriyet reported on 25 November that according to information received from well-informed sources, two more concentration camps had been built in Rumania, at Tasaui and Novodary. It said that some of the prisoners kept in these camps were used to construct the railway which will link Carpa Voda to Midia, while another group was building a port at Midia. The same article reported that a group of German technicians had been sent to these camps from Soviet camps in Germany and that they were being employed in the Rumanian oil fields. Also, said the article, the Soviets have recently sent new groups of experts to Rumania.(4)

Czechoslovakia

According to an 11 November dispatch datelined Vienna, the purge in Czechoslovakia which began after the arrest of Rudolf Slansky has resulted in the arrest of close to 100,000 persons, many of whom have been sent to forced-labor camps. The dispatch said that reports reaching Vienna reveal that the civil police, security police, and the army have cooperated in an effort to complete the purge. Moreover, continued the dispatch, many policemen have themselves been arrested and jailed.(2)

Poland

Information on conditions in Poland is revealed in two interviews which Cumhuriyet reporters had with Talat Amercuhan, a Turk and a long-time Warsaw resident, who had left Warsaw 8 days before. According to the newspaper, Amercuhan's family was at one time the richest in Warsaw and controlled the city's bread supply; Amercuhan, who was educated in Berlin, lived in Warsaw from 1939 until he left for Turkey.(5) In discussing conditions in Warsaw and in Poland, Amercuhan reported the following:

People are afraid to talk to anyone on the street because spies are everywhere. The police know every word you say and everything you do. For example, one day, I went to the British Legation to obtain a visa; the moment I emerged, I was grabbed by the police, but they let me go when I exhibited my Turkish passport. A Pole will definitely not talk to a foreigner. All the servants in the embassies and legations are tools of the Communists, who report everything they hear and see. Only those who will cooperate are allowed to take such jobs.

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Today, all foodstuffs are rationed in Warsaw and throughout Poland. A family is allowed $\frac{1}{2}$ kilogram of meat and 125 grams of butter a week, for which one must stand in line. But ration cards are given only to workers; those not employed are not entitled to cards. Wearing apparel is also very expensive; a meter of cloth costs 500 zlotys, but a well-placed official receives a salary of only 600 to 800 zlotys. Although a dollar is officially worth only 4 zlotys, it brings 55 zlotys on the black market.

With respect to living quarters, a working man is entitled to 10 square meters [of floor space]. A husband and wife are allotted one room for which they pay 100 zlotys; if the room contains more than 30 square meters, it is counted as two rooms.

A secret resistance organization is active in Poland today. For example, a few days before I left, Martika, a rabid Communist speaker on the radio station operating on the 49-meter wave length, was found dead; this and similar incidents occur daily. The most powerful man in Poland now is President Bierut; but whenever he goes out, he is accompanied by eight or ten armored cars. Actually, not 5 percent of the people are Communist; the people only seem to be Communist out of fear. If an election were held tomorrow, the Communists would not receive a vote.

The Soviets are always behind the scenes in everything that happens. An organization called The Society of Friends of Children is converting the children into pro-Soviets. The society administers the school organization during vacations and arranges camps and courses for indoctrinating the children. Moreover, Russian is a compulsory course in the schools.

The Soviets have begun large-scale military preparations in Poland, and Soviet officers in Polish uniforms have been spread throughout the army. All factories in Warsaw have been assigned to military work, stocks of gas masks and munitions are being built up, and food stores are being canned. The Warsaw airfield is being enlarged and converted into a strictly military field. No one is allowed to view the installations being built there, and the people who were living in the vicinity have been moved elsewhere.(6)

SOURCES

1. Istanbul, Cumhuriyet, 27 Nov 51
2. Ibid., 12 Dec 51
3. Ibid., 17 Dec 51
4. Ibid., 25 Nov 51
5. Ibid., 7 Dec 51
6. Ibid., 8 Dec 51

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